

**Communicative Disorders 6220  
Severe Communication Impairments**

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**Class Time:** Wednesday, 5:15 – 7:45 pm **Distance Ed. Building, Room #105**

**Prerequisite Requirements:** Departmental permission

**Text (Required):** Beukelman, D.R. & Mirenda, P. (2013). Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Supporting Children and Adults with Complex Communication Needs. (4<sup>th</sup> Edition). Baltimore: Paul H. Brooks Publishing Company.

**Course Description:** The primary purpose of this course is to teach students why, when and how augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and related assistive technology can be used to aid individuals with complex communication needs. The characteristics of AAC, assessment, funding, intervention, communication partner training, educational inclusion, literacy, autism and acquired disabilities will be addressed.

**Course Fee:** A \$50 course fee has been added to this course. The field of augmentative and alternative communication is constantly changing. In order to supply students with the most current technology possible, this course fee is utilized to offset the cost of replacing AAC equipment. This equipment may include AAC apps, iPads, high and low tech communication devices, software and accessories (switches, headpointers, trackers, etc.).

**Course Objectives:**

Students will:

1. Learn to accurately identify individuals who could benefit from the use of AAC and related assistive technology.
2. Learn how to assess AAC needs in individuals with a variety of developmental and acquired impairments.
3. Gain an appreciation of cultural diversity as it relates to the selection and use of AAC devices and systems.
4. Become familiar with a variety of AAC devices and systems (both high and low tech).
5. Become familiar with the assets and limitations of representative types of AAC systems and devices.
6. Gain an understanding of some of the primary issues involved in using AAC in clinical, educational, vocational and other settings.

7. Gain an understanding of service delivery issues that need to be addressed to improve AAC assessment and intervention strategies.
8. Become familiar with at least three electronic communication devices/systems.
9. Become familiar with a variety of funding mechanisms to assist individuals in obtaining AAC systems and services.

**Mode of Instruction:** Students will listen to lectures, participate in class discussions, view video of clinical cases, receive critiques of individual assignments, complete readings on assigned topics, and participate in lab activities intended to provide students with hands-on experience with a range of assistive technology.

If a student has a disability that will likely require some accommodation by the instructor, the student must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center. In cooperation with the DRC, course material may be provided in alternative formats – large print, audio, or Braille upon request.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Students will complete all assignments by designated due dates unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Failure to complete assignments on time will result in a reduction in grade for that assignment (1 point each day the assignment is late).
2. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, arrive **ON TIME**, and participate in class discussions. More than one unexcused absence will result in a half grade reduction for each occurrence after the first.
3. Any student with a disability requiring modifications in course material and/or instructional activities (e.g. enlarged texts, taped texts, untimed tests, etc.) should notify the instructor within the first week of the semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

**Course Evaluation:**

1. Assignments (10 points each): Descriptions for the assignments are available on Canvas.
  - a. Equipment Request
  - b. Practice Assessment
  - c. Developmental Disabilities
  - d. Tobii-Dynavox
  - e. Educational Inclusion
  - f. Prentke Romich Company
  - g. Literacy – Communication Board
  - h. Communication Partner Training
  - i. Saltillo
  - j. Case Studies
2. Final Exam (100 points)

## Grading:

Test grades and grades for the course will be figured using the following University Grading Scale:

- A 100-93%
- A- 92-90%
- B+ 89-87%
- B 86-83%
- B- 82-80%
- C+ 79-77%
- C 76-73%
- C- 72-70%
- D 69-60%
- F 59% and below

It is my philosophy that grades are earned, not given. Your final grade will be based upon your individual points compared to the number of points possible. **No extra credit will be given in this course, so please don't bother asking. I also round grades, based on percentage. For example, a 92.5% will be rounded to a 93% for an A. A 92.49% will round down to a 92% or A-. Requests to award a higher grade than the grade earned will not be acknowledged. Plan now to work to obtain the grade you are expecting in the course.**

**Cheating/Academic Dishonesty:** Please refer to the University's policy at <http://www.usu.edu/policies/PDF/Acad-Integrity.pdf> for more information.

## Tentative Lecture Topics/Reading Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction to AAC	Chapters 1-4
Week 2: AAC Assessment	Chapters 5-6
Week 3: Developmental Disabilities	Chapter 8
Week 4: Tobii-Dynavox	
Week 5: Intervention: Beginning Communicators	Chapter 9
Week 6: Educational Inclusion	Chapter 13
Week 7: Intervention: Symbolic Communication	Chapters 10-11
Week 8: Prentke Romich Company	
Week 9: Literacy	Chapter 12
Week 10: Communication Partner Instruction	
Week 11: Acquired Disabilities	Chapters 14-18
Week 12: Saltillo	
Week 13: Certification & Ethics	
Week 14: Case Studies	
Week 15: Final Examination	

## **Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA):**

COMD 6220 will fulfill the following ASHA requirements from the Knowledge and Skills Acquisition (KASA) form. This form is intended for use by the certification applicant during the graduate program to track the processes by which the knowledge and skills specified in the standards for the CCC are being acquired. The following standards will be achieved through your participation in class lectures, labs, evaluations, and assignments.

Standard IV-B: Linguistic and Cultural aspects of Basic Human Communication Processes.

Standard IV-C: Speech, Language, Hearing, Communication, and Swallowing Disorders and Differences (Augmentative and alternative communication modalities): The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge re: communication modalities, including the etiologies, characteristics, and anatomical physiological, acoustic, psychological, developmental, linguistic, and cultural correlates.

Standard IV-D: Prevention, Assessment, and Intervention (Augmentative and alternative communication modalities): The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate knowledge re: the principles and methods of assessment and intervention regarding communication modalities.

Standard IV-E, IV-G, IV-H: Contemporary Professional Issues: The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge re: standards of ethical conduct as it relates to augmentative and alternative communication modalities. The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge re: certification, specialty recognition, licensure, and other relevant professional credentials associated with augmentative and assistive communication modalities.

Standard IV-F: Research: The student will demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge re: processes used in research and integration of research principles into evidence-based clinical practice in the area of augmentative and alternative communication modalities.

Standard V-B 1: Augmentative and alternative communication modalities (Skills in Evaluation)

- a. Conduct screening procedures
- b. Collect case history information and integrate information from clients/patients, family, caregivers, teachers, relevant others, and other professionals

- c. Select and administer appropriate evaluation procedures, such as behavioral observations, nonstandardized and standardized tests, and instrumental procedures.
- d. Adapt evaluation procedures to meet client/patient needs
- e. Interpret, integrate, and synthesize all information to develop diagnoses and make appropriate recommendations for intervention
- f. Complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support evaluation
- g. Refer clients/patients for appropriate services

Standard V-B 2: Augmentative and alternative communication modalities (Skills in Intervention)

- a. Develop setting-appropriate intervention plans with measurable and achievable goals that meet clients'/patients' needs. Collaborate with clients/patients and relevant others in the planning process
- b. Implement intervention plans (involve clients/patients and relevant others in the intervention process)
- c. Select or develop and use appropriate materials and instrumentation for prevention and intervention
- d. Measure and evaluate clients'/patients' performance and progress
- e. Modify intervention plans, strategies, materials, or instrumentation as appropriate to meet the needs of clients/patients
- f. Complete administrative and reporting functions necessary to support intervention
- g. Identify and refer clients/patients for services as appropriate

Standard V-B 3: Clinical Interaction and Personal Qualities related to augmentative/alternative communication modalities

- a. Communicate effectively, recognizing the needs, values, preferred mode of communication, and cultural/linguistic background of the client/patient, family, caregivers, and relevant others.
- b. Collaborate with other professionals in case management.
- c. Provide counseling regarding communication and swallowing disorders to clients/patients, family, caregivers, and relevant others.
- d. Adhere to the ASHA Code of Ethics and behave professionally.